

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 8, 9, 11-17, and 20-29 are pending, including independent claims 1, 8, 13, 17, 22 and 26. The claims were again rejected over the prior art on the basis of similar combinations of prior art as before. Applicants continue to disagree with the Examiner's application of the prior art.

Initially, Applicants thank the Examiner for his time in discussing the Office Action with Applicants' undersigned attorney on June 9, 2005. In the telephone interview, Applicants' attorney explained that most of the independent claims recite a particular configuration and placement of microphones. The Examiner contended that a particular configuration is arbitrary and obvious. Applicants' attorney responded that each of the claimed configurations was found by Applicants to be a favorable configuration, as explained in detail in the detailed description. No agreement was reached.

Applicants have further amended each independent claim to clarify the claimed invention and submit that each claim is patentably distinct over the cited art. Dependent claim 12 has been canceled.

Amended claim 1 recites a specific circuit and a specific arrangement of directional microphones. Support is found in the application at, e.g., Figs. 1, 3(a) and 4; p. 8, line 15 to p. 10, line 3; p. 11, lines 9-20. Through experimentation described at p. 12, lines 12-31, Applicants found that the claimed configuration is particularly beneficial to obtain an improved average SN ratio.

Amended independent claim 8 also recites a specific circuit and a specific arrangement of directional microphones. Support is found in the application at, e.g., Figs. 1, 3(a) and 5; p. 8, line 15 to p. 10, line 3; p. 11, lines 9-17, 22-24. Through experimentation described at p. 13, lines 1-8, Applicants found that this claimed configuration also is particularly beneficial to obtain an improved average SN ratio.

Amended independent claim 17 also recites a specific circuit and a specific arrangement of directional microphones. Support is found in the application at Figs. 9, 11-14; p. 14, line 13 to p. 15, line 6; p. 17, line 9-p. 18, line 5. Through experimentation described at p. 17, line 9 to p. 18, line 5, Applicants found that this claimed configuration also is particularly beneficial to obtain an improved average SN ratio.

Amended independent claim 22 also recites a specific circuit and a specific arrangement of directional microphones. Support is found in the application at Figs. 1,

3(b) and 6; p. 8, line 15 to p. 10, line 3; p. 11, line 25 to p. 12, line 5; p. 12, lines 12-25; p. 13, lines 9-15. Through experimentation described at p. 13, lines 9-15, Applicants found that this claimed configuration also is particularly beneficial to obtain an improved average SN ratio.

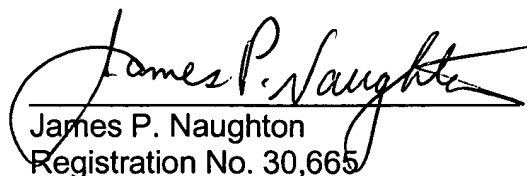
Amended independent claim 26 also recites a specific circuit and a specific arrangement of directional microphones. Support is found in the application at Figs. 1, 3(b), 7; p. 8, line 15 to p. 10, line 3; p. 11, line 25 to p. 12, line 2 and lines 6-11; p. 13, lines 16-27. Through experimentation described at p. 12, lines 13-25; p. 13, lines 16-27, Applicants found that this claimed configuration also is particularly beneficial to obtain an improved average SN ratio.

None of the specifically claimed circuit and microphone configurations discussed above is described in or suggested by the cited references.

Amended independent claim 13 is directed to the embodiment shown in Fig. 8 of the present application and described at, e.g., p. 14, lines 1-10. The present amendments recite additional circuit details. This specific circuit configuration also is not described in or suggested by any of the cited art.

In summary, Applicants submit that the presently amended claims are directed to specific circuit arrangements that are patentable over the cited art. The specific circuits and the specific placement of microphones are supported in the application. Applicants' experimentation to arrive at the specific microphone placement is also explained in the application, so that the specifically claimed arrangements cannot be said to be arbitrary. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,


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